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Uncapped? No worries, IPL can make you rich

SEVERAL PLAYERS WHO HAVE NOT PLAYED FOR INDIA HAD THEIR BIGGEST PAY DAY AT THE IPL MINI AUCTION. A LOOK

LIFE-CHANGING DAY

Kartik Sharma (19), ₹14.2 cr. Prashant Veer (20), ₹14.2 cr. Mangesh Yadav (23), ₹5.2 cr. And **Auqib Nabi** (29), ₹8.4 cr. From 19 to 29 year old, these uncapped players' lives will change forever. If Veer's father is a contractual teacher in UP earning ₹10,000 a month and supporting a family, Nabi began his journey in Baramulla where there is hardly any cricket infrastructure. For Sharma, it is a reward for pursuing a sport his father too pursued as a profession. Their houses burst into emotional celebrations. If the youngsters were spotted by scouts during state T20 leagues, for Nabi, it was a reward after years of toil without much return | **P17**

OVERSEAS STARS REVEL

Australian all-rounder Cameron Green became the highest-paid overseas star, signed by Kolkata Knight Riders for ₹25.5 crore. **Matheesa Pathirana** (₹18 crore) and Mustafizur Rahman (₹9.2 crore) were also signed by KKR who made the most of the big purse. Sunrisers Hyderabad saved up their purse and went after Liam Livingstone (₹13 crore) while Lucknow Super Giants went big for Josh Inglis (₹8.6 crore). The trend continued with overseas seamers and explosive all-rounders in great demand

THE TOP 3 HIGHEST-PAID PLAYERS

T20 GENERATION IN DEMAND

- CSK head coach **Stephen Fleming** called them the "T20 babies", up and coming stars in domestic cricket between 19-23 who were scouted and fought for at the auction table. This is a generation that grew up on IPL and were spotted in state T20 leagues
- It helped that this was a mini-auction and the purse is as big as it gets, but teams were keen to invest in younger talent with the T20 game evolving faster than ever. It will be interesting to see how these players and teams look by the time next mega auction comes along

₹215.45 cr
TOTAL MONEY SPENT AT THE AUCTION

35
AS MANY AS 35 OF THE 77 PLAYERS SIGNED AT THE AUCTION ARE UNCAPPED INDIANS (1 UNCAPPED AUSTRALIAN)

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Bondi Beach assailant had roots in Hyderabad

Sajid migrated to Australia in '98; no India connect to radicalisation

CHITHALURI REVANTH AND BALA CHAUHAN @ Hyderabad/ Bengaluru

SAJID Akram, 50, one of the perpetrators of the Bondi Beach mass murder in Sydney, had migrated from Hyderabad to Australia in November 1998, Telangana Director General of Police B Shivadhar Reddy said on Tuesday.

Sajid and his son Naveed, 24, massacred Jews on Sunday while the latter were observing the first day of Hanukkah, killing 15 people. Sajid was shot dead on the spot by the police while Naveed was injured. After the attack, the Australian police raided Sajid's house and found his Doodhbowli in Hyderabad address on his passport, sources told this daily.

A commerce graduate from an autonomous minority college in Hyderabad, Sajid migrated to Australia on student visa in search of better livelihood. His student visa was transferred in 2001 to a partner visa and later Resident Return Visas.

"His first job was as a salesman in a mall in Sydney. He later married Venera Grosso of European origin. The couple had two children — 24-year-old son Naveed (the second Bondi shooter) and a daughter. Since 1998, Sajid visited Hyderabad on six occasions primarily for property issues. His last visit was in 2022, to settle his property share with his elder brother, who lives with their widowed mother and his family in Tolichowki in Hyderabad. The relationship between the siblings was not courteous," sources on condition of anonymity told this newspaper.

(From left) Naveed and Sajid Akram

ISIS footprint

According to unconfirmed reports, Naveed was associated with Isaac El Matari from Sydney, who had declared himself the IS commander for Australia and was jailed in 2021 for terrorist offences

Sajid did not even show up when his father died in 2009. His dad worked for the UAE army and returned to Hyderabad after retirement. That is when he built the house in Tolichowki.

"The family is in shock because Sajid never displayed any extremist ideology. Surprisingly, he did not have many friends in Hyderabad, who could throw light on his radicalisation," the sources added.

The DGP said the factors that led to their radicalisation appear to have no connection with India.

In Australia, Sajid obtained a firearm licence for 'recreational hunting'. Weeks ahead of the Bondi massacre, Sajid and Naveed flew to the Philippines and received "military training". They arrived on November 1 and left on November 28. Sajid had travelled using his Indian passport. Naveed is an Australian citizen. He was earlier assessed by authorities in 2019 for his alleged links with IS but was cleared for not posing any ongoing threat.

G-Ram-G Bill introduced in LS amid din

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE Lok Sabha on Tuesday witnessed fierce protests from Opposition members after the government introduced a new bill to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Several Opposition MPs demanded that the new bill—Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill, 2025—be sent to a Parliamentary panel.

Amid the buzz that the government is determined to clear the bill in the current session, INDIA bloc leaders have decided to meet at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's chamber at 10.15 am on Wednesday for a strategy session.

The Congress has also issued a Whip mandating its MPs to be present in the Lok Sabha for the next three days as VB-G RAM G and other key legislations are likely to come up for consideration and passage.

On Tuesday, after introducing VB-G RAM G Bill, Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the government not only believes in Gandhi but also follows his principles.

CONG'S NATIONWIDE PROTESTS TODAY

The Congress will hold protests across the country on Wednesday against VB-G RAM, alleging the Centre is trying to dismantle a rights-based welfare scheme and attack Mahatma Gandhi's legacy. Senior leader K C Venugopal, in a letter to all state Congress chiefs, urged them to organise protests at all district headquarters

Leading the attack, Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the bill would eliminate the legal guarantee of employment for rural workers and increase the financial burden on states. She alleged it will give the Centre power to pre-determine the funds and the areas of allocation, thereby ending the demand-based system.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor termed the bill a retrograde step, saying the 40% financial burden on states will lead to "delays in wage payments, a reduction in the number of workdays, and ultimately the destruction of the scheme itself".

After staging a walkout from the House, the Opposition leaders held a protest at the Mahatma Gandhi statue in the Parliament complex.

Separately, in a post on X, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi alleged Prime Minister Narendra Modi had always opposed the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and had been trying to weaken the rural employment scheme. "Modiji has a deep hatred for two things — the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and the rights of the poor," he said.

25 KILLED IN U.P. ROAD ACCIDENTS IN A DAY

MAJOR PILE-UP

Cranes clear the charred remains of a bus after a fog-hit pile-up involving several buses and cars triggered fires on the Yamuna Expressway in Mathura on Tuesday morning. At least 13 were killed. In all, across UP, 25 people were killed and 59 injured in a series of fog-linked accidents. Inset: People help an injured person | PTI

Court rejects Herald case chargesheet

UDAYAN KISHORE @ New Delhi

IN a huge relief to Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, a Delhi court on Tuesday refused to take cognisance of a chargesheet filed against them by Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case in the National Herald case.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne said the prosecution complaint (ED's equivalent to a chargesheet) filed by ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was not maintainable since the case was not filed on the basis of an FIR.

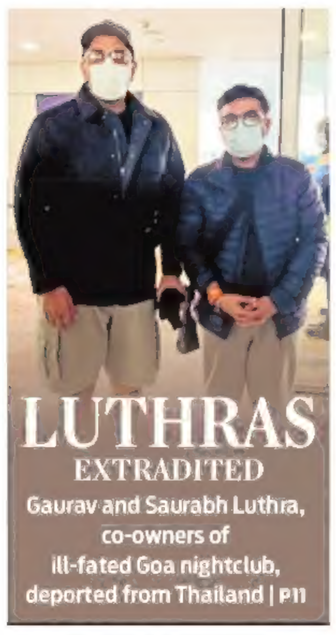
Sonia Gandhi

The court, however, said that since Delhi Police has registered an FIR in the matter, ED can make further submissions in the case, if it wants.

Apart from Gandhis, Suman Dubey, Sam Pitroda, Young Indian, Dotex Merchandise and Sunil Bhandari were also accused in the case.

"Cognisance of the offence (of money laundering) defined under Section 3 and punishable under Section 4 is declined. The complaint is dismissed," the court said.

The ED initiated its probe based on a private complaint filed by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy accusing Gandhis and others of cheating, criminal conspiracy, breach of trust and misappropriation.



LUTHRAS EXTRADITED

Gaurav and Saurabh Luthra, co-owners of ill-fated Goa nightclub, deported from Thailand | PTI

Bengal SIR: 58L voters out of revised poll rolls

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

WITH deletions of more than 58 lakh alleged dead and bogus voters from the list, Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday released the draft electoral rolls for West Bengal after completing phase one of Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

As per the draft electoral rolls, the names of 7,08,16,631 voters were included in the rolls in West Bengal's phase 1 of SIR.

The ECI has identified about 1.66 crores out of these voters who may be called for hearings to verify their documents again.

In January, 2025, there were 7,66,37,529 voters on the list. With 58,20,898 voters, who are either dead or have permanently shifted, dropped, the official electors is now 7,08,16,631.

The commission said the deletion list includes voters whose names appeared in the January 2025 electoral rolls but do not figure in the post-SIR draft rolls.

With assembly elections likely early next year, the draft rolls — along with a detailed, booth-wise list of deleted voters and reasons for deletion — have been uploaded on the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) website (ceowestbengal.wb.gov.in/Electors), the ECI voter portal (voters.eci.gov.in) and ECINET application.

Voters can get their names checked in the draft rolls either online or offline, the commission said.

A press statement issued by office of the state CEO Manoj Kumar Agarwal said all claims and objections in the draft rolls can be made between December 16 and January 15, 2026. Hearing and verifications will be made from December 16 to February 7. Final rolls will be out on February 14.

CM for 5 yrs? Brass will decide: Siddu

SUNIL PATIL @Belagavi

THE simmering leadership tussle within ruling Congress spilled onto the floor of the Legislative Assembly on Monday, with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah acknowledging that the party high command will take the final decision on his continuation, even as he asserted that the Congress government will complete its full five-year term.

The politically charged exchange unfolded during the question hour when Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka asked whether Siddaramaiah would remain chief minister till the end of the term amid growing speculation over leadership change.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah speaks in the Assembly in Belagavi on Tuesday

As the debate intensified, Siddaramaiah urged the opposition "not to add fuel to the fire", prompting Ashoka to retort that if a fire had indeed broken out within Congress, the House deserved to know whether Siddaramaiah would continue as chief minister.

Hitting back, Siddaramaiah said he would serve the full term and pointed out that Congress received a clear people's mandate, unlike BJP, which he alleged came to power earlier through "Operation Lotus". He also dismissed BJP charges of Congress seeking JDS support in the past, saying it was JDS that approached Congress and not the other way around.

Offering a clarification later, Siddaramaiah said that while his position ultimately rests with the Congress high command, he is confident of completing five years and leading the party back to power in the next Assembly elections.

As mechanic lay dying on road, no one helped

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a heart-wrenching incident that has raised serious concerns about public apathy and humanity, a 34-year-old mechanic died after suffering a cardiac arrest on the road, allegedly following the failure of a private hospital to provide him an ambulance. His wife's desperate pleas for help from passersby for nearly 10 minutes went unanswered. The incident occurred in the early hours of December 12 at Kadirenahalli in Banashankari.

The deceased, Venkataramanan, is survived by his wife Roopa, five-year-old son, and a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter. Roopa on Tuesday said that their ordeal began around 3.30 am when Venkataramanan vomited at home and complained of mild chest discomfort. **CONTINUED ON: P5**

Edu in mess: Severe faculty shortage cripples varsities

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

A severe shortage of teaching and non-teaching staff has crippled the functioning of universities in the state. While older institutions are seeing an acute shortage of faculty, newly carved universities are functioning without adequate teachers or government funds. This has forced new universities to steeply increase the fee structure, leading to lesser enrolment of students.

Reputed and premier universities, including the University of Mysore, Karnatak University in Dharwad and Mangalore University, are facing nearly a 70% shortage in teaching staff. With no recruitment at regular intervals, these institutions are largely dependent on guest faculty. But this has led to lack of accountability, impacting the quality of education, academics say.

Also, five out of 32 state universities do not have full-fledged vice-chancellors, as per information provided by Higher Education Minister Dr MC Sudhakar during the ongoing winter session of the Legislative Council in Belagavi. He was replying to an unstarred question by BJP MLC CT Ravi. Bangalore University, which was trifurcated a few years ago, has been affected severely.

During its previous tenure, the BJP government implemented 'One District, One University' policy that created several district universities that were carved out of existing universities. Of the ten such universities formed, including in Koppal, Kodagu, Haveri, Bagalkot and Hassan, all, except the one in Bidar, were found to be not viable. The government has since decided to merge these universities back with their parent institutions. But there is a stiff opposition to that.

Sources in the Higher Education Department said the state government created new universities and passed Acts governing them. **P7**

EXPRESS READ

Tiger caught in snare dies in estate near Nagarahole

Bengaluru: A five-year-old male tiger was found dead, caught in a snare in a coffee estate near Nagarahole Tiger Reserve (NTR) on Tuesday morning. "The injury reveals the tiger was caught in the snare two days ago. The tiger dragged itself while trying to come free for two days, and died of asphyxiation," said Abhishek V, DCF, Madikeri | **P6**

B'luru short film goes to Sundance Film Festival

Bengaluru: Bengaluru-based filmmaker Anooya Swamy's debut short film 'Pankaja' has been officially selected for the 2026 Sundance Film Festival. 'Pankaja' follows a young woman's search for her husband, a migrant labourer. **P2**

Lokayukta raids reveal ₹18.2cr DA of 4 officials

Bengaluru: The Lokayukta police on Tuesday unearthed disproportionate assets (DA) of Rs 18.20 crore possessed by four officials of the state government. The raids were conducted at 21 places in Mandya, Dharwad, Hospet and Shivamogga. **P5**